

Thursday November 3, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

The East Central BOCES desires to provide this comment in support of Boulder Valley School District's request to allow the extension of school district networking services to their surrounding communities without penalizing the district's budget by forcing them to cost allocate away a portion of their discounted services.

The reality of both school districts and the learners that they serve, is that learning is no longer contained within the walls of a school facility. The very technologies that the E-Rate program seeks to make affordable for schools also enable learning to occur whether the student is in the school building, at their home or in a hospital. This learning is enabled by an expanding variety of digital delivery tools, however, the use of these tools also comes with a risk of excluding economically disadvantaged students. If a family cannot afford broadband services for their student's home, the student, through no fault of their own, is placed at a disadvantage as compared to their more affluent classmates. The East Central BOCES believes that the potential of any student has nothing to do with the socioeconomic status of their parents or guardians.

Forcing districts to cost allocate away portions of their discounted services while seeking to close the homework gap in their communities will have the chilling effect of districts electing not to make the attempt rather than risk E-Rate program funding.

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